



State of Connecticut  
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

TESTIMONY OF THE DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

IN SUPPORT OF:

S.B. No. 364 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NOTIFICATION TO THE STATE'S  
ATTORNEY OF THE DEATH OF A PERSON IN STATE CUSTODY

JOINT COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

March 7, 2016

The Division of Criminal Justice respectfully requests the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT for S.B. No. 364, An Act Concerning Notification to the State's Attorney of the Death of a Person in State Custody. This bill is submitted to the Judiciary Committee as part of the Division's 2016 Legislative Recommendations to the General Assembly.

The State of Connecticut is responsible for the care and welfare of many populations of vulnerable individuals ranging from youths confined in juvenile facilities to developmentally disabled adults in group homes or other facilities. Many of these populations have special needs making them particularly vulnerable. In 2013, *The Hartford Courant* published an investigative report concluding that dozens of vulnerable individuals had died in group homes, institutions and other facilities between 2004 and 2010. In many of these cases abuse or neglect was cited as a factor in the death.

S.B. No. 364 ensures that notice is provided to an independent third party, that being the appropriate State's Attorney, of such deaths to ensure that an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the individual's death can be conducted if appropriate. In some instances, the State's Attorney is already notified because a death has been reported to the police, who in turn notify the State's Attorney. However, there is no requirement as would be established by this bill. The review of such deaths to determine if further investigation is in order is an appropriate function assigned to the State's Attorney pursuant to Article XXIII of the Connecticut Constitution, which places the responsibility for the investigation and prosecution of all criminal matters with the Division of Criminal Justice, i.e., the State's Attorney.

In conclusion, the Division respectfully requests the Committee's JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT for S.B. No. 364. We also wish to express our appreciation to the Committee for your consideration of this legislation and would be happy to provide any additional information or answer any questions the Committee might have.